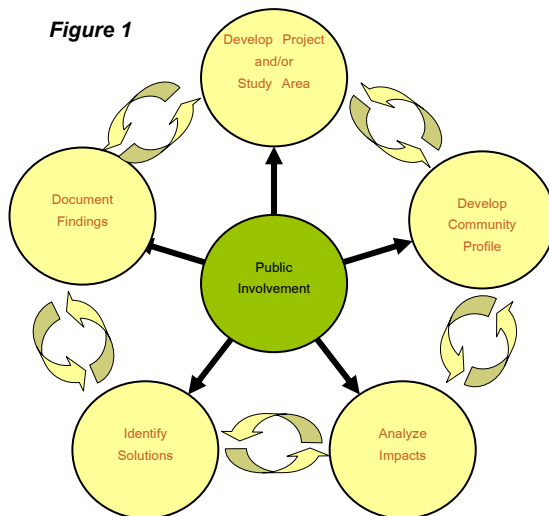


## 2. THE COMMUNITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT PROCESS

### INTRODUCTION<sup>1</sup>

The assessment of community impacts rarely flows in a fixed, predictable series of steps. However, the analyst must be aware of the basis of logic behind the process in performing an assessment. Figure 1 describes the iterative nature of the Community Impact Assessment Process: The specific steps of the Community Impact Assessment Process are described below.



### Define the Project and Study Area

In coordination with engineers, develop various project alternatives which satisfy the project purpose and need, and identify areas of potential impact.



*The CIA project area is determined by demographics and the relationships between the community and its retail and social services, and institutions.*

### Develop a Community Profile

Determine the characteristics of the affected area, such as neighborhood boundaries, the location of residents and businesses, demographic information, economic data, social history of communities, and land use plans. The characteristics of the affected area are determined based upon review of a variety of sources. These include and are not limited to census data, oral and written histories, physical boundaries, studies, other plans, visual survey and architecture.

### Analyze Impacts

Examine the impacts to the community of the proposed action versus no action. Identify and investigate the consequences of the transportation action. There are many categories of impacts to the community that can be analyzed. These include and are not limited to social and psychological,

<sup>1</sup> The Community Impact Assessment Process is fully described in Community Impact Assessment: A Quick Reference For Transportation (U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration Office of Environmental Planning. Publication No. FHWA-PD-96-036 HEP-30/8-96(10M)P). The information in this chapter is reproduced from the Federal Highways Publication.

physical, land use, economic, mobility and access, provision of public services, safety, and displacement.

### **Identify Solutions**

Identify and recommend potential solutions to address adverse impacts. Techniques include avoidance minimization, mitigation, and enhancement. Avoidance requires that the impacted area or site be avoided. Minimization includes techniques such as phasing, re-routing, reducing the scale or size and buffering. Mitigation includes providing other benefits to compensate for project impacts such as enhancements, off site improvements with a logical nexus and cash or other types of compensation